

Ghostly tramway rails revealed by shifting sand on Cornish beach

by Graeme Wilkinson

As much as three feet of sand has been washed away from the beach, revealing a section of aging tramway tracks



Above: The exposed remains of an old tramway on Summerleaze Beach at Bude. *(Image: Nicky Coote)*

The recent storms have revealed an aging section of railway line buried beneath a Cornish beach. The rails were uncovered after sand was swept away from Summerleaze Beach in Bude. These pictures of the ghostly tracks emerging from the sand were taken by Nicky Coote.

She said: "My first thought when I saw them was that it must have been a bad storm to wash up big pieces of metal. Then I realised that they had been uncovered by the storm and the sand level had dropped by a good 2 to 3 feet from the day before, leaving a sand-cliff, which my little dog loved running along."



Above: The exposed tramway rails on Summerleaze beach in Bude. *(Image: Nicky Coote)*

According to the history society Bude Canal and Harbour Company, sand used to be regularly taken from the beach to barges or used as ship's ballast. The canal at

Bude once ran all the way to Launceston, meaning it was ideally placed for transporting the sand inland.



Above: A horse-drawn wagon used to transport sand from the beach at Bude, pictured around 1923. (*Image: Bude Canal and Harbour Company*)

The rails on the beach date from 1924 when sand was transported to reclaim land near the town's recreation ground. The practice of taking sand continued until 1941.

Source: <https://www.cornwalllive.com/news/cornwall-news/ghostly-tramway-rails-revealed-shifting-2219681> (accessed 26th November 2018)